

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TAIPEI 05125 150952Z

12
ACTION INR-11

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DRC-01

/025 W

----- 077396

R 150901Z AUG 74
FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2655
INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 5125

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, TW, VS
SUBJECT: FURTHER BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON GVN AMBASSADOR
NGUYEN VAN KIEU

REF: A. STATE 164969; B. TAIPEI 4992

1. WHEN AMBASSADOR KIEU RETURNED MY CALL AUGUST 15 I HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN SOME ADDITIONAL BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION. DEPARTMENT WILL BEAR IN MIND ALL OF WHAT FOLLOWS IS KIEU'S OWN ACCOUNT OF SITUATIONS AND RELATIONS COVERED.

2. KIEU CONSIDERS HIS CAREER HAS BEEN IN POLITICS AS OPPOSED TO HIS BROTHER'S MILITARY CAREER. HE DATES THIS ALL THE WAY BACK TO HIS STUDENT YEARS IN HANOI WHEN HE WAS AFFILIATED WITH THE NATIONALIST (AS OPPOSED TO COMMUNIST) REVOLUTIONARIES AND WHEN HE RECALLS CONTACTS EVEN THEN WITH DINH TRINH CHIN (ABOUT WHOM I HAD INQUIRED), WHO WAS A YOUNG TEEN-AGE ACTIVIST IN TOUCH WITH OLDER STUDENTS. IN THIS PERIOD KIEU ALSO RECALLS A PERIOD SPENT IN KWANGSI AND ELSEWHERE IN SOUTHERN CHINA, PRESUMABLY WHEN HE AND FRIENDS WERE NOT IN GOOD GRACES OF FRENCH COLONIAL AUTHORITIES.

3. ALTHOUGH KIEU PROFESSES TO HAVE KNOWN DIEN, THE FIRST PROMINENT POLITICAL ROLE HE MENTIONED WAS THAT IN MINISTERIAL-LEVEL POSITION RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUTH IN PHAN HUY QUAT CABINET.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TAIPEI 05125 150952Z

ACCORDING TO KIEU, MARSHAL KY FOLLOWED HIM IN THAT POSITION.

MY INQUIRIES ABOUT KY'S PRESENT ACTIVITIES AND WHEREABOUTS ELICITED THE OBSERVATION THAT KY MAY WELL BE RUNNING FOR OFFICE IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS NEXT YEAR AND MAY BE SUCCESSFUL. KIEU VOLUNTEERED, "WE LIKE HIM VERY MUCH" AND EXPLAINED HOW HE HAD PERSONALLY ADVISED KY SOME YEARS AGO TO GO A LITTLE SLOWER, ACCUMULATE EXPERIENCE AND WAIT FOR A WHILE BEFORE AGAIN MAKING A BID IN NATIONAL POLITICS. HE ALSO RECOUNTED HOW HE HAD TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO COVER UP KY'S BOO-BOO CONCERNING "HITLER YOUTH" FOR VIETNAM. KIEU SAID THAT HE MUCH PREFERRED KY, WHO WAS SMARTER AND MORE VIGOROUS AND STRONGLY ANTI-COMMUNIST, TO BIG MINH, WHO WAS EASILY INFLUENCED, NOT TOO INTELLIGENT AND AMBIVALENT IN HIS POLITICAL OUTLOOK PROBABLY BECAUSE OF HIS BROTHER WITH THE NORTH VIETNAMESE.

4. THE LAST GOVERNMENTAL POSITION KIEU MENTIONED BEFORE COMING HERE IN 1967 WAS AS YOUTH COMMISSIONER. IN THESE YEARS HE PROFESSES TO HAVE BEEN VERY WELL ACQUAINTED WITH PHIL HABIB AND RECALLED HAVING MANY VIGOROUS ARGUMENTS WITH HABIB, WHOM HE SPEAKS OF WITH CONSIDERABLE REGARD AND AFFECTION. LATER HE WORKED WITH ARCH CALHOUN. KIEU REFERRED TO TRAN VAN DO AS SOMEONE THAT EVERYONE AMONG VIETNAMESE ADMIRES AND HE ALSO APPEARS TO BE WELL DISPOSED TO BUI DIEM, CURRENTLY AMBASSADOR-AT-LARGE. WHEN I MENTIONED DANG DUC KHOI, HE REACTED ONLY BY REFERRING TO HIM AS A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF KY. AT LEAST TWICE KIEU EMPHASIZED HOW GRATEFUL HIS BROTHER, THE PRESIDENT, HAS BEEN FOR THE U.S. HAVING SENT "TO HELP HIM," FIRST AMBASSADOR BUNKER AND NOW AMBASSADOR MARTIN.

5. KIEU MADE A CONSIDERABLE POINT OF THE IMPORTANCE FOR SOUTH VIETNAM'S STRENGTH AND SURVIVAL OF ITS FOLLOWING DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES. HE MENTIONED THAT FOR EXAMPLE PRESIDENT THIEU HAS BEEN SHARPLY CRITICIZED BY THE HUSBAND OF HIS NIECE IN THE ASSEMBLY BUT HE HAD TO LEARN THE HARD LESSON OF ACCEPTING THIS RATHER THAN REACTING AS A MILITARY MAN MIGHT DO. KIEU SAID THAT HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES WHO HAVE HAD POLITICAL CAREERS UNDERSTOOD WHAT DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES MEANT AND WHY THEY WERE IMPORTANT BUT THE MILITARY LEADERS OF SOUTH VIETNAM TODAY (PRESUMABLY FIRST AND FOREMOST HIS BROTHER) HAVE NOW ALSO COME
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TAIPEI 05125 150952Z

TO UNDERSTAND THIS.

6. KIEU HAD LITTLE TO SAY ABOUT TAIWAN OR HIS FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES HERE. IN OUR PREVIOUS CONVERSATION HE DID CONFIRM TO ME THE GROU PROJECTED ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH VIETNAM TO ESTABLISH EXPORT PROCESSING ZONE. IN OUR SECOND X TALK HE RECALLED THAT SOMETIME IN THE MID-60'S HE HAD VISITED HERE WITH A SOUTH VIETNAMESE DELEGATION LED,

I BELIEVE, BY KY. KIEU DID MAKE A POINT OF REMARKING HOW
MANY PROMINENT TAIWANESE SHOW STRONG CONTINUING AFFINITIES
WITH JAPAN AND OFTEN MAKE A POINT OF HAVING THEIR CHILDREN
LEARN JAPANESE; HE OBSERVED
THAT JAPAN HAD TREATED TAIWAN MUCH MORE GENTLY THAN KOREA
AND CERTAINLY THAN CHINA.

7. KIEU ALWAYS WEARS A CLOTH GLOVE ON HIS RIGHT HAND WHICH
APPEARS TO BE DEFORMED ALTHOUGH HE USES IT FOR SHAKING
HANDS. HE EXPECTS TO SPEND ABOUT A WEEK IN SAIGON AT THE
END OF THIS MONTH. IF FURTHER ASSESSMENT IS DESIRED, IT
WAS MY IMPRESSION THAT AMBASSADOR HABIB MIGHT BE IN THE
BEST POSITION TO PROVIDE IT. UNGER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION, BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, AMBASSADORS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 AUG 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CollinP0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TAIPEI05125
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740224-0636
From: TAIPEI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740843/aaaabkvw.tel
Line Count: 128
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION INR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. STATE 164969; B. TAIPEI 4992
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12-Aug-2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <26 FEB 2003 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FURTHER BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON GVN AMBASSADOR NGUYEN VAN KIEU
TAGS: PINR, TW, VS, (NGUYEN VAN KIEU)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005